

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** July 10, 2012

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### **Contemporary reservation life topic of next history book club meeting**

PIERRE, S.D. -- American Indian reservations are the most and least American of places, according to novelist David Treuer.

*Rez Life* is Treuer's look at contemporary reservation life. The nonfiction book is the featured selection at the July meeting of the History and Heritage Book Club. The meeting begins at 7 p.m. CDT on Thursday, July 12, at the Cultural Heritage Center in Pierre.

The guest speaker will be Leroy "J.R." LaPlante, South Dakota's first secretary of the Department of Tribal Relations.

"Mr. LaPlante was born on a reservation and is an enrolled member of the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe," said Patricia Miller, president of the South Dakota Historical Society Foundation. "As South Dakota secretary of Tribal Relations, he works with the nine tribal governments in South Dakota. We welcome his insights into life on reservations in South Dakota."

The foundation is the nonprofit fund-raising partner of the South Dakota State Historical Society. The foundation and SDSHS Press sponsor the History and Heritage Book Club.

LaPlante will tell those attending the book club meeting about growing up on a reservation in South Dakota and about his role as secretary of Tribal Relations. The meeting is free and everyone is welcome to attend.

LaPlante was born in Eagle Butte and attended Cheyenne-Eagle Butte Schools through the ninth grade. He left home at age 14 to attend college preparatory school at Harrison-Chilhowee Baptist Academy in Seymour, Tenn. He remained in Tennessee to attend college at Carson-Newman College in Jefferson City, Tenn.

After earning a bachelor's degree in sociology, LaPlante returned to the Cheyenne River Reservation in 1990 and served as both youth minister and associate pastor at First Baptist Church in Eagle Butte. LaPlante has an extensive background working for American Indian human service organizations. He practiced law in Vermillion and served as the chief judge and court administrator for the Crow Creek Sioux Tribe in Fort Thompson. He is a member of the first cohort of Native Nation Rebuilders selected by the Bush Foundation in 2010 and served as an Equal Justice Works, AmeriCorps Legal Fellow with South Dakota Access to Justice in 2009.

Treuer is Ojibwe from the Leech Lake Reservation in northern Minnesota. He left the reservation to attend Princeton University. In addition to *Rez Life*, Treuer is the author of three novels, a book of literary criticism and writings that have appeared in *Esquire*, *Granta*, *The Washington Post* and the *Los Angeles Times*.

*Rez Life* is available at the Heritage Store at the Cultural Heritage Center. Book club members receive a 10 percent discount, and SDSHS members receive an additional 5 percent discount, when they purchase the book at the Heritage Store. For more information, call (605) 773-6006.

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*The South Dakota Historical Society Foundation is a private charitable nonprofit that seeks funding to assist the South Dakota State Historical Society in programming and projects to preserve South Dakota's history and heritage for future generations.*

*The South Dakota State Historical Society is a division of the Department of Tourism. The Department of Tourism is comprised of Tourism, the South Dakota Arts Council, and the State Historical Society. The Department is led by Secretary James D. Hagen. The State Historical Society is headquartered at the South Dakota Cultural Heritage Center in Pierre. The center houses the society's world-class museum, the archives, and the historic preservation, publishing and administrative/development offices. Call (605) 773-3458 or visit [www.history.sd.gov](http://www.history.sd.gov) for more information. The society also has an archaeology office in Rapid City; call (605) 394-1936 for more information.*